

PIERCE COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION BENEFIT AREA AUTHORITY
DBA PIERCE TRANSIT
Pierce County, Washington
January 1, 1992 Through December 31, 1992

Schedule Of Findings

1. Pierce Transit Should Improve Controls Over Vanpool Reporting

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) under Section 15 of the Federal Transit Act requires all public mass transit systems to report certain operating information. Vanpool unlinked passenger trips and passenger miles are reported on Form 406) Transit System Service (Non-Rail Modes). Information on the Form 406 is the basis for federal funding to the transit.

For its vanpool activity, Pierce Transit uses 100 percent count to obtain the data. Due to the lack of standardized procedures, the following weaknesses were noted in the reporting process:

- a. Documentation was not retained to support changes made to inaccurate or incomplete monthly driver records.
- b. There were systematic errors in the computer spreadsheet used to record the driver records and some data was inaccurately input.
- c. Documents and reports were not reviewed or signed by a supervisor as required.
- d. Required analytical review was not performed.

Inaccurate vanpool data caused by the weaknesses in the accumulation of data may jeopardize federal funding for this service.

We recommend Pierce Transit provide training for employees on the collection and reporting of vanpool data. We also recommend the computerized information be compared to the driver reports in a timely manner and that analytical review procedures be implemented to detect errors in the data.

2. Pierce Transit Should Follow FTA Sampling Procedures

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) under Section 15 of the Federal Transit Act requires all public mass transit systems to report passenger miles and the number of passengers using one of three methods; 100 percent count, an FTA suggested technique, or an alternative sampling technique. Pierce Transit selected an alternative sampling technique for sampling the Motor Bus-Purchased data. They did not have a qualified statistician approve the sampling methodology nor did they document the sampling technique.

Requirements for using an alternative technique are documented in the *FTA Reporting Manual For The 1992 Section 15 Report Year*, which states in part:

A qualified statistician must determine that the sampling technique meets FTA's confidence and precision levels. Both the technique and the statistician's approval must be documented and retained

The sampling technique used may not have been statistically valid in meeting the confidence and precision levels required by the FTA. Pierce Transit believed it was using an acceptable alternative sampling technique by using the DOT sampling manual.

We recommend that Pierce Transit obtain approval from a qualified statistician for the sampling methodology selected and that they document the sampling techniques used to develop the sample.